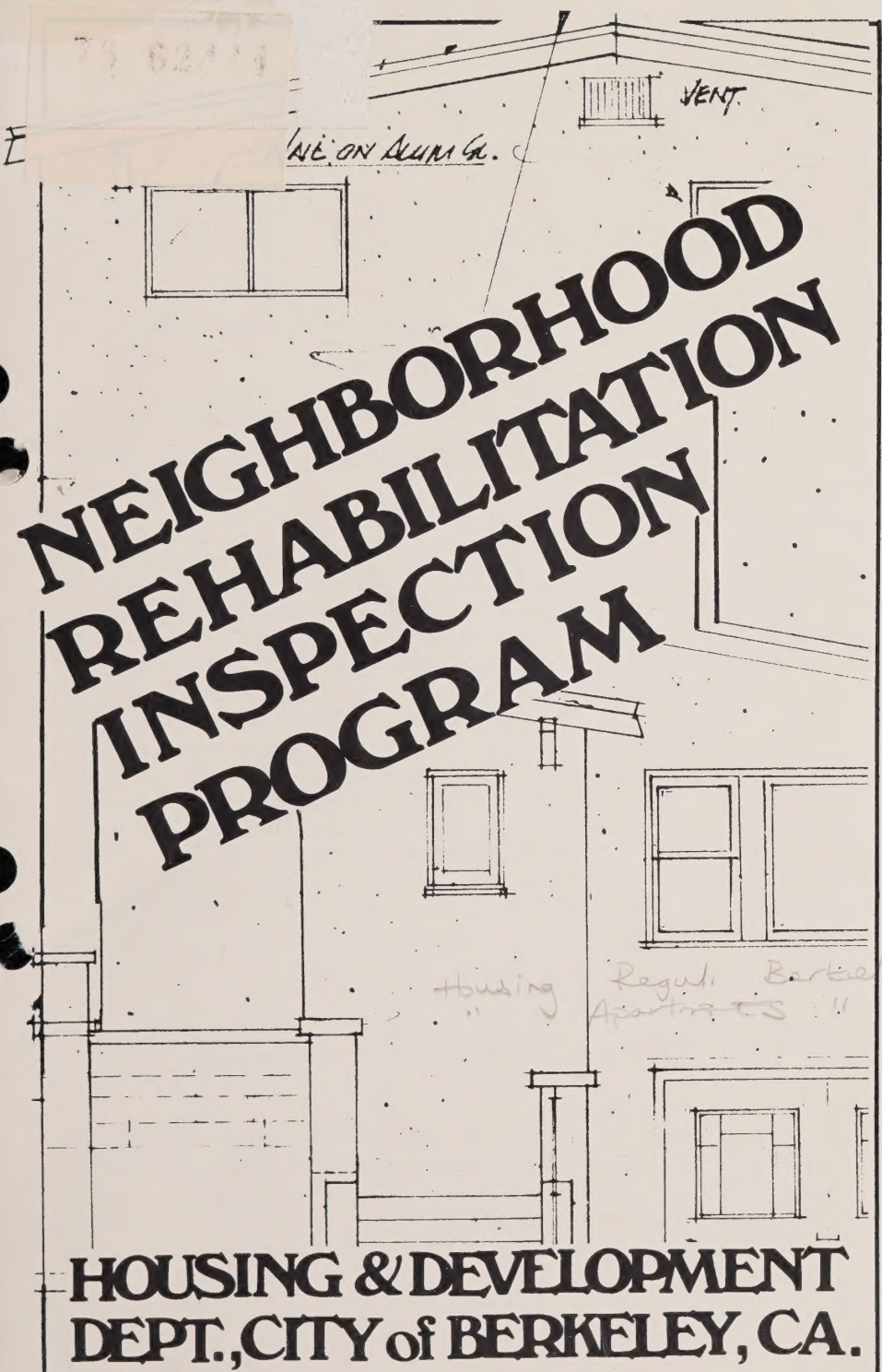




Architectural sketch of a building facade. At the top, a roofline features a small vent labeled "VENT". Below the roof, a window is labeled "AIR ON SUMMER". The main title "NEIGHBORHOOD REHABILITATION INSPECTION PROGRAM" is written diagonally across the center. To the right, there is a large rectangular window. Below the title, there is a small square window and a larger double-hung window. At the bottom, there is a small square window and a larger double-hung window. The sketch is drawn with simple lines and includes some handwritten notes.

NEIGHBORHOOD REHABILITATION INSPECTION PROGRAM

Housing & Development
DEPT., CITY of BERKELEY, CA.

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NEIGHBORHOOD REHABILITATION INSPECTION PROGRAM

WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS

HOW CAN BERKELEY PRESERVE ITS NEIGHBORHOODS?

Berkeley, like most core cities, faces the problem of deteriorating homes and gradually declining neighborhoods. In order to slow down the rate of deterioration the Berkeley City Council has taken positive steps to preserve neighborhoods by developing housing conservation programs. Until the present, however, Berkeley's housing conservation programs have affected mostly owner-occupied homes. Yet, over 60% of the housing stock is in rental units. The Council recognized its responsibility to meet the needs of tenants by approving the Neighborhood Rehabilitation Inspection Program, a program to inspect residential rental units and bring them up to minimum Housing Code standards. The first phase of the program requires inspection of buildings containing three or more apartments or six or more rented rooms, in the district bounded by Sacramento Street, University Avenue, San Pablo Avenue and Cedar Street. Later, this program will extend throughout the entire city and will include single family and duplex rentals.

WHAT IS THE HOUSING CODE?

Minimum standards for the protection of life, limb, health, property, safety and welfare of the general public, and owners and occupants of existing residential properties are contained in the Uniform Housing Code. The State of California requires all cities to adopt and enforce this code.

DO ALL CODE VIOLATIONS HAVE TO BE CORRECTED REGARDLESS OF THE HARDSHIP INVOLVED?

Recognizing that inflexible enforcement of the Housing Code may create hardship, particularly for low income owners and tenants, the City Council has adopted a flexible enforcement policy that will satisfy State requirements, yet will minimize hardship. Flexible enforcement is achieved by classifying Housing Code violations into three categories, and placing priority on the correction of violations that are the most dangerous. The three categories are:

- A. Hazardous Code Violations (Category A). These are conditions that pose a clear and present danger to life, health and safety. Typical examples are leaking gas lines, broken sewers, exposed electrical wiring. Because of the immediate danger of such conditions, all owners of properties will be required to correct code violations that fall into the Category A.
- B. Incipently Hazardous Code Violations (Category B). These are conditions which are not presently hazardous but which may soon and with little warning become dangerous, or which may cause dilapidation if allowed to continue. Typical examples are loose or cracked stair treads, deteriorated roofs, defective lights and switches. Owners are not required to correct these conditions if either the tenant or owner receives a hardship exemption.
- C. Other Code Violations (Category C). These include all remaining violations not covered by Category A or B. Typical examples are missing exterior weatherproofing, cracked or loose window grouting, siding in contact with soil. Owners are not required to correct these conditions if either the tenant or owner receives a hardship exemption.

All Category A hazards must be corrected within 21 days. In cases where hardship will not result, Category B and C violations must be corrected according to a reasonable schedule agreed upon by the owner and City staff.

HOW ARE HARDSHIP EXEMPTIONS GRANTED?

The City Council has adopted detailed guidelines for determining hardship for owners and tenants. The Housing Advisory and Appeals Board, a citizens' commission appointed by the City Council, is authorized to grant hardship exemptions. Both tenants and owners will receive information on the eligibility requirements and application process for hardship exemptions and instructions on how to apply.

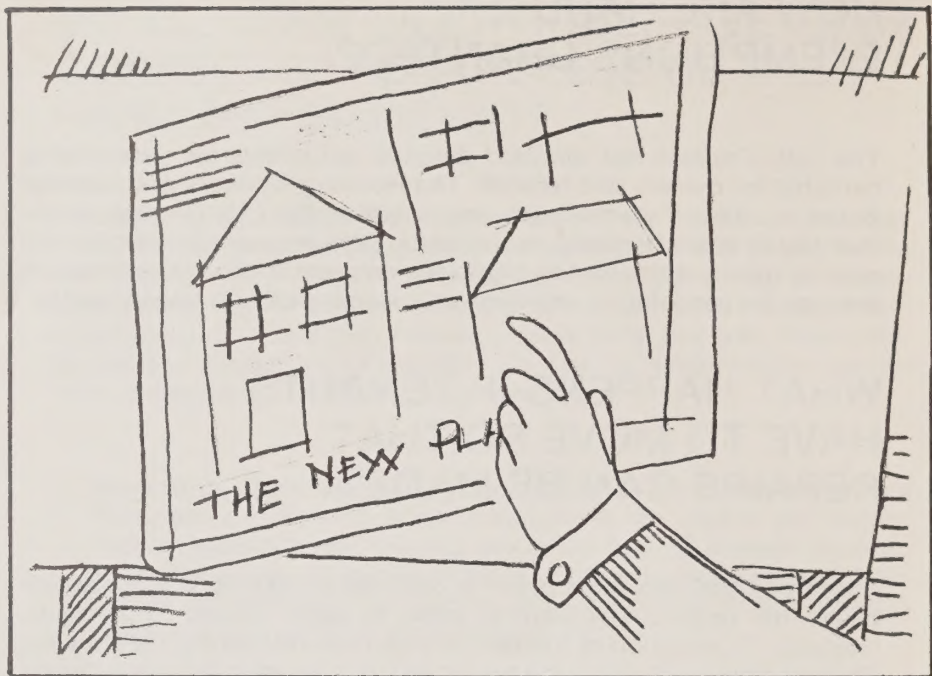
WHAT HAPPENS IF TENANTS HAVE TO MOVE SO THAT REPAIRS CAN BE MADE?

Based on the City's experience in previous programs, it is not anticipated that tenants will have to move to allow repairs to be made. However, if relocation of a tenant is absolutely necessary, the Housing Representative will assist the tenant to apply for relocation assistance. This assistance is provided by the Central Relocation Agency and includes direct payments, counseling, and help in obtaining replacement housing.

DOES THE CITY PROVIDE LOANS FOR CORRECTING CODE VIOLATIONS?

The City Council has earmarked \$325,000 for municipal loans at below market interest rates for eligible property owners in the project neighborhood who are unable to obtain loans from conventional sources. Repayment schedules will be tailored to the needs of the borrower. Owners who receive municipal loans must agree to limit rent increases as required by the Municipal Loan Guidelines.

In addition, loans are available from the City's Emergency Repair Program. This program provides loans for the correction of hazardous or emergency conditions at below market interest rates based on the owner's ability to pay. Rent increase safeguards apply to Emergency Repair Loans as well. The Housing Representative will inform owners of the loan programs and assist them to apply.



WHAT SERVICES DOES NEIGHBORHOOD REHABILITATION OFFER?

A copy of the inspection report, describing code violations and additional recommendations for improvements, will be sent to each owner and tenant.

Housing Representatives will assist owners who are doing repair work themselves to understand code requirements and plan repair schedules. More detailed assistance on self-help repair will be provided at the Project Office. Owners who obtain municipal loans for housing rehabilitation will also receive the following services at no cost:

- Financial counseling
- Furnishing of cost estimates of work to be done
- Preparation of plans and specifications
- Advertising and evaluation of bids
- Monitoring of construction contracts
- Inspection of completed work
- Recording of appropriate documents

In addition, the Housing Representative will make referrals for tenants who wish to apply for subsidized housing and relocation assistance.

WHAT IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE?

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The Neighborhood Improvement Committee is formally recognized by the City Council as the citizen participation group for the Neighborhood Rehabilitation Program. Residents and property owners in the project area are encouraged to join the committee. Notice of the first meeting will be sent to every resident and property owner in the neighborhood and community organizations in the area.

The Neighborhood Improvement Committee will help to solve problems by working with both City staff and the community. One of the major tasks of the committee is to develop a plan for public improvements, such as street trees, sidewalk repairs, etc.



HOW IS CONTACT WITH THE PROGRAM MADE?

A Housing Representative will arrange a convenient time to make the first inspection. After the first inspection the Housing Representative will stay in close contact with owners and tenants to provide assistance as needed or as requested. Inspections will proceed block-by-block. However, owners of buildings containing three or more units or six or more rented rooms who wish to receive a property inspection now may do so by calling the Project Office at 644-6504.



WHO ADMINISTERS NEIGHBORHOOD REHABILITATION?

The Director of Housing and Development is responsible for the overall administration of this program. Day-to-day administration is handled by the Project Coordinator. If you have questions concerning a problem with the program please call the Neighborhood Rehabilitation Project Coordinator, 644-6504, or come into the Project Office which is on the ground floor of City Hall, 2134 Grove Street.

Housing & Development
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Housing & Development Department
City of Berkeley, CA

Housing & Development Department
City Hall
2134 Grove Street
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